

## Action Through Enterprise EducATE Programme Gombele JHS Baseline Data Analysis Report – November 2016

#### **Baseline data collection at Gombele JHS**

Ahead of launching roll out of the ATE EducATE programme of school feeding and educational provisions, at Gombele Junior High School (JHS) in January 2017, ATE Volunteer, Jonathan Hall travelled to Gombele to collect baseline data over the course of one week in November 2016 with the support of local ATE Consultant, Kenneth Gan.

The purpose of the baseline data collection is to gain the measure of the current situation; the starting point against which ATE will measure the impacts and changes brought about for the pupils, the school and the community through the school feeding programme and other much needed support with books, uniforms, etc.

Key baseline data collection activities included: recording attendance from the class registers; gathering exam results; measuring pupils' height and weight; carrying out a happiness survey; and conducting interviews with a range of stakeholders including pupils, parents, teachers and Headteacher.

#### Project outcomes and how these will be measured:

The intended outcomes of the school feeding project at Gombele Junior High School are:

- Increased enrolment
- Increased attendance
- Reduction in hunger and protection from increasing food shortages in the lean season
- Increased levels of concentration in the classroom
- Increased rates of retention / reduction in drop out
- Improvements in attainment
- Increased rates of transition from Junior to Senior High School
- Improved health and wellbeing (increases in height, weight and BMI, and happiness)

The baseline was gathered - and project outcomes will be measured - through the class registers, surveys and interviews with children, parents and teachers, weighing and measuring of children, Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) results and tracking of children following completion of Junior High School. ATE also aims to access Education Management Information System (EMIS) data from the Ghana Education Service to draw comparisons with other schools across the district on key data collected on enrolment, attendance and BECE results. Data will be disaggregated and analysed by gender and case studies will include disabled children and orphans as some of the most vulnerable of the student population. It was also felt to be important that a number of children *not* currently attending school were also included in baseline interviews. The findings are presented in this report below.



Image 1: Map of Lawra, Gombele Village highlighted



Image 2: Gombele Junior High School – meeting to begin collecting data

## **Findings of the Baseline Data Collection**

## **Key findings:**

- Food in Gombele is very sporadic; many households only eat dinner on 4 days after market day and spend the following 3 days hungry.
- Parents struggle to provide food, text books and uniforms for their children due to poverty.
- Pupils, parents and teachers state that when the children are hungry they leave school early.
- Last year there was a 50% drop out rate of boys moving from JHS 2 to JHS 3 and a 44% drop out rate of girls moving from JHS1 to JHS 2.
- In 2015/16 JHS 2 boys had the lowest average attendance of just 46% and JHS 3 boys had the highest at 91%
- For the first 2 months of 2016/17, attendance at Gombele JHS already shows an encouraging improvement; up by 9% in November compared to the year before.
- Despite the poverty, Gombele JHS has managed to achieve good exam results within the District.
- 95% (n.55) of the 58 pupils who were weighed and measured have a healthy weight for their age. The average BMI for the whole school is 21.7, but some students are at the lower end and one child is underweight.
- There is a clear indication that girls, particularly in JHS 1, are less happy at school than boys





#### **Enrolment and Retention**

The total school population at Gombele is very small. At the start of academic year 2015/16 there were just 67 pupils enrolled, rising to 70 by the third term. At the start of 2016/17, there were 64 pupils enrolled in the school and JHS 1 saw an intake of 5 less girls compared to the year before (-27%).

There is just one class per year group with the smallest cohort being in JHS 3. One likely reason for this is the rate of 'drop out' as pupils move up through the school. Looking at the cohorts of pupils transitioning from one class to the next, from 2015/16 to 2016/17, there are some worrying drops in numbers (see table below), particularly the very low 50% retention rate of boys moving from JHS 2 to JHS 3 and the 56% retention rate for girls moving from JHS 1 to JHS 2:

Ac. Year	Cohort 1	Class	Boys	Girls	Cohort 2	Class	Boys	Girls
		size				size		
2015/16	JHS 1 □	30	12	18	JHS 2 □	27	14	13
2016/17	JHS 2	24	14	10	JHS 3	17	7	10
	Retention %	80%	117%	56%	Retention %	63%	50%	77%

Emmanuel Baba, who has been Headteacher at Gombele JHS for 6 years, says there are generally more drop outs from girls than from boys. He says that girls will often start in the majority in JHS 1, but then begin to leave. By JHS 2 and 3 boys are usually in the majority. He feels this is due to girls being more neglected within their families, and that early marriage is common. There is also a trend for boys to leave to go South in the school holidays to find manual work and never return. Migration from poorer parts of Northern Ghana to large Southern towns to earn money as porters is common practice for many young

people (known as "Kayayee"), often ending their education and placing themselves in positions of great vulnerability to exploitation.

#### **Attendance**

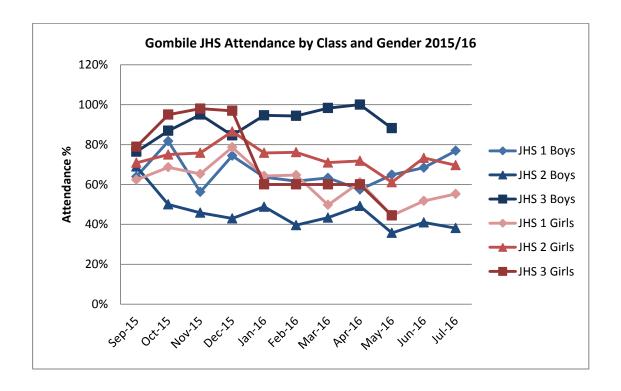
The attendance record of pupils at Gombele JHS for academic year 2015/16, show some significant variations between girls' and boys' attendance and between classes (JHS 1, 2 and 3).

The average annual attendance rate at Gombele JHS for academic year 2015/16 was 65%. Overall, boys had a slightly lower average attendance rate (63%) than girls (67%). However, the attendance record shows some significant variations when looking at boys' and girls' average attendance rates by class (see table below). JHS 3 boys have the highest average attendance rate across the school by a long way at 91%. JHS 2 boys have the lowest average attendance at half that of JHS 3 boys, at just 46%.

	Average annual attendance rates by gender and class 2015/16									
JHS 1 Boys JHS 2 Boys JHS 3 Boys JHS 1 Girls JHS 2 Girls JHS 3 G										
	67%	46%	91%	61%	73%	73%				

Looking at the attendance of boys' and girls' by class across the academic year there are some significant spikes and drops. Of particular concern is JHS 3 girls' attendance which suddenly drops from 97% in December 2015 to 60% in January 2016 and drops again to just 44% in May (NB: registration was not recorded by the class teacher for JHS 3 in June and July 2016 which coincides with the pupils taking their BECE). Attendance drops fairly significantly for girls across all classes in returning to school following the Christmas holidays. JHS 1 boys' attendance also shows a substantial drop from 82% in October 2015 to 56% in November but rises again to 74% in December. JHS 2 boys' attendance drops from 69% right at the start of the academic year down to 43% by the end of the first term. Their attendance remains the lowest across the school through the year down to an attendance rate of just 38% by the end of the third term (July 2016).

Gombele JHS's Headteacher says that during farming season attendance will be low; every June through to September. Additionally, usually one school day a week is taken up by pupils tending the farms of the teachers, which is fairly common practice in the area. A number of the pupils and parents interviewed said that the children absent themselves or go home early when they are hungry.



Attendance 2016/17: Attendance at Gombele JHS for the first 2 months of academic year 2016/17 already shows an encouraging improvement for the same time period the previous year. Average attendance was up 6 points on the previous September to 76%, and up 9 points compared to the previous October to 94%. ATE believes that the anticipation of the launch of school feeding, with the engagement of the PTA and community in building the school kitchen, is the likely cause of this positive increase before it has even begun.

#### **BECE Results**

In June, candidates in the third year of Junior High Schools may take the Basic Education Certificate Exam (BECE) for certification and selection to Senior High Schools and Technical Institutions. Subjects taken for the BECE at Gombele JHS include; English, Social Studies, Religious and Moral Education, Maths, Science, Dagaare (the local dialect), and Basic Design and Education. A nine point scale is used with Grade 1 denoting the highest performance and Grade 9 the lowest, therefore the highest BECE score available would be 7 for all 7 subjects and lowest would be 63.

In June 2015, 20 candidates in the third year at Gombele JHS were registered to take the BECE; 15 boys and 5 girls. Final BECE grades ranged from 18 to 46, with an average grade of 33. However, comparing results for boys and girls, boys outperformed girls with an average grade of 32 compared to 41 for girls.

In 2016, 13 pupils were registered. Two girls dropped out meaning only 11 sat the exams; 8 boys and 3 girls. The grades in 2016 were slightly lower, with an average grade of 38. The Headteacher said that "Despite the poverty, Gombele JHS has managed to achieve good exam results. Last year (2014/15), Gombele JHS was first for BECE exam results in the Babile Circuit, and third in the whole of Lawra District".

	Whole	school	Во	ys	Girls		
Year	No. who sat	Average grade	No. who sat	Average	No. who	Average	
	BECE		BECE	grade	sat BECE	grade	
2014/15	20	33	15	32	5	41	
2015/16	11	38	8	39	3	37	

<sup>\*</sup>Please note 7 would be the highest achievable grade and 63 the lowest

#### Hunger

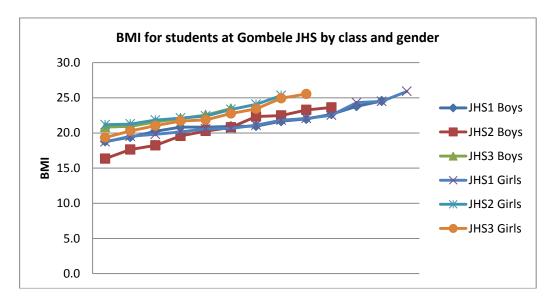
In the Upper West Region, towards the end of the long dry season, particularly in April and May, food insecurity is high. However, findings from the interviews with children, parents and staff at Gombele JHS reveal hunger is prevalent year-round, even outside of the "lean season". Food insecure households are heavily reliant on maize, millet and other staples and have a lower intake of vegetables, meat and fish which are vital sources of nutrition (World Food Programme, Ministry of Food and Agriculture). Parents in Gombele say they struggle to provide one meal a day for the family. Many families in the area can afford to eat for 4-5 days after the weekly Babile market then go hungry for the following 2-3 days. Both parents and children state that when they have had nothing to eat children either play truant or come home early when hungry and tired. Some non-attenders said that they would attend if school meals were available (See Appendix 3: Interviews). The teachers at Gombele JHS say that the children are willing to learn, but they are fighting poverty and hunger. They need fuel to learn but the distraction of hunger means concentration in class drops off in the afternoon affecting energy levels and mood. Teachers also raised concerns about the pupils' physical growth and development which they feel is not what it should be.

#### **BMI**

The height and weight of the students at Gombele JHS was taken in order to calculate their body mass index (BMI); a calculation of body fat as one way of measuring if someone is a healthy weight. BMI is calculated as 'BMI = (weight/height)/height', and the result allows the student's weight status to be determined as either: Underweight (BMI below 18.5), Normal (18.5-24.9), Overweight (25.0-29.9), or Obese (30.0 and above).

Below is a table of the average age, height, weight and BMI for each class by gender, plus a chart of the BMI for the students at the school from lowest to highest for each class and by gender. The BMI range for the school goes from 16.3 to 25.9 and the average BMI for the whole student population of the school is 21.7.

Student group	Average age	Average height	Average weight	Average BMI
JHS 1 Boys	19	1.66	58.78	21.4
JHS 2 Boys	20.3	1.64	55.9	20.5
JHS 3 Boys	20.2	1.72	51.6	21.9
JHS 1 Girls	16.2	1.58	54.40	21.7
JHS 2 Girls	17.6	1.6	58.1	22.7
JHS 3 Girls	15.8	1.61	57.8	22.3



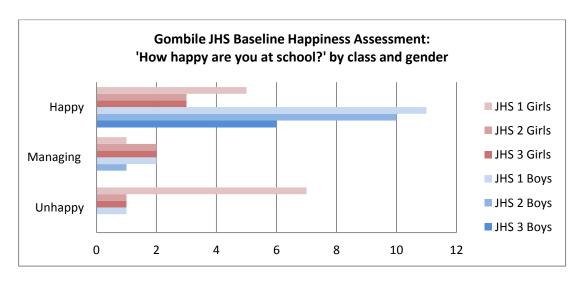
However, further calculations are made for those students who are classed as a child to teen (2 to 19 years old). This is in order to gain a more accurate understanding of their weight status ranked according to their percentile for age and sex (see tables below). The results show that 95% (n.55) of the 58 pupils who were weighed and measured have a healthy weight. 5 results were returned as not being a healthy weight; 1 boy in JHS 2 recorded as underweight and 4 girls in the school were overweight.

## **Happiness**

All the pupils at Gombele JHS were asked to indicate on a piece of paper 'How happy are you at school?' By circling either: 1) Unhappy, 2) Managing, 3) Happy. This was completed with the intention to gain further understanding about the responses through interviews with a number of the pupils.

The data sets at the school are small with just 31 boys and 25 girls responding to the happiness assessment. However, there is a clear indication that girls, particularly in JHS 1, are less happy at school than boys. See tables below. ATE's intention was to draw out more information about the pupil's lives and gain some insight into some of the reasons behind their responses through one-on-one interviews. (See section below and Appendix 3).

Table showing responses on happiness at school for boys and girls (%):								
Unhappy Managing Happy								
Boys	3%	10%	87%					
Girls	36%	20%	44%					



#### Provisions at the school

Due to the high levels of poverty in the Gombele area, parent's struggle to provide their children with the provisions they need to access education such as textbooks, exercise books, pens/pencils and uniforms. There is an acute shortage of textbooks in the school with 5 pupils to each textbook. Water for the school comes from a water butt that is filled by carrying pitchers from a pump situated approx half a mile away.

#### Interviews with stakeholders

On 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016, Interviews were undertaken with students, teachers, the Headteacher, parents and pupils who had dropped out of Junior High School. There were mixed reports and opinions about the parent's value of education and engagement with the school, though some are clearly very actively engaged and have a good relationship with the school and staff.

The interviews reveal the level of abject poverty, of food insecurity in the area, and the knock-on-effects on children being able to access education (See Appendix 3). Here are some examples:

- Vitalis (22 years old, JHS 3) leaves school early if he is hungry and tired. He never has breakfast but has dinner every day. He finds it difficult to study in the afternoon because of hunger. Hunger makes him unhappy.
- Jennifer (16 years old, JHS 3) bicycles to school every day on a bike loaned by the school. It takes her two and a half hours each way. On the day of the interview she hasn't eaten for two days.
- Michael (English teacher) says the children are willing to learn, but they are fighting poverty and hunger. He sees the drop-out rate as a result of parents who are not financially capable of looking after the family, and whom are unable to provide books and uniforms.
- Emmanuel Baba (Headteacher) believes there are more challenges at Gombele than at any of his other postings because of the severe poverty. The school desperately needs textbooks, at the moment students are sharing textbooks, 5 to a textbook. The Head felt his school could absorb higher numbers of students due to the feeding programme with no difficulty.
- Simon has 7 children; 5 of them attend school, and one boy went down south to become a labourer, and one girl left home to be with her boyfriend. Their attendance rate goes down when they are hungry, especially in the summer months. Food also runs out at the end of the week before Babile market, so they experience 2 or 3 days of hunger.
- Christie (aged 40, parent) has difficulties with food in the summer months, and struggles to provide
  at the end of the week before Babile market day. The children go hungry. When they are hungry
  the children play truant, or often come home early. They would come to JHS everyday if food was
  provided.
- Euralius (aged 10, does not attend school) says food is very sporadic; sometimes he eats, sometimes not. When he is hungry he goes into the bush to find fruits. If there were school meals he thinks he could attend school and still have time to farm after school.

• Kwame (doesn't know his age, does not attend school) used to go to Gombele Primary, but his parents took him out to work as a cowherd. He wants to go to school but his parents won't allow it.







Images of interviewees and interviews being conducted by ATE Volunteer, Jonathan Hall









Pupil Jennifer, parents Sammy and Christie and Emmanuel Baba, the Headteacher



# ATE Gombele JHS Baseline Data Analysis Report – Nov 2016 Appendix 1: Metrics

What to measure	Intended outcome of school feeding	Source of info
Enrolment	More children enrolling to access education	<ul> <li>Registers 2015-16 (and first term of 2016-17)</li> <li>EMIS data for comparison across the district</li> </ul>
Attendance	<ul> <li>Increase daily attendance</li> <li>Retain children in school for the whole school day – not leaving early</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Registers 2015-16 (and first term of 2016-17)</li> <li>Interviews</li> <li>EMIS data for comparison across the district</li> </ul>
Hunger	<ul> <li>Reduce the level of hunger during the school day</li> <li>Protecting children from increasing food shortages during the lean season (Compare with control schools through the year if we can organise to do so)</li> </ul>	• Interviews
Concentration	<ul><li>Increase concentration in the classroom</li><li>Increase attention span</li></ul>	Interviews
<ul><li>Drop-out /</li><li>Retention</li></ul>	<ul> <li>Reduce the number of children who drop out of school</li> <li>Increase the number of children retained in school</li> </ul>	• Registers 2015-16 (and first term of 2016-17) discussion w teachers
Attainment	<ul> <li>Increase percentage of pass rates at BECE</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>BECE results 2015-16</li> <li>EMIS data for comparison across the district</li> </ul>
Transition	<ul> <li>Increase the number of students transitioning from JHS to SHS</li> </ul>	School records and discussion w teachers
Health and wellbeing	<ul> <li>Increase in average height, weight and BMI of children.</li> <li>Reduction in number of lack-of- nutrition related illnesses and deaths.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Height and weight of children</li> <li>Registers (if illness-related absences are captured)</li> </ul>
Happiness	<ul> <li>Increase number of children reporting they are happy at school</li> <li>Teachers report positive difference</li> </ul>	<ul><li>Happiness assessment</li><li>Interviews</li></ul>



## ATE Gombele JHS Baseline Data Analysis Report – Nov 2016 Appendix 2: BMI

Weight status	ВМІ	Percentile by age and sex		
	(to assess weight status for an adult)	(to assess weight status for a child-teen)		
Underweight	Below 18.5	Less than 5th percentile		
Healthy weight	18.5-24.9	5th up to 85th percentile		
Overweight 25.0-29.9		85th to less than 95th percentile		
Obese	30.0 and above	equal to or greater than the 95th percentile		

In the table below, calculations of BMI, and percentile by age and sex (for child-teen), show all students to be of a healthy weight, apart from the 5 highlighted (yellow and orange); 1 underweight and 4 overweight.

	JHS1									
JHS1 Boys	Age	BMI	Percentile	JHS2 Girls	Age	BMI	Percentile			
1	22	24.5	adult	1	17	19.8	33rd			
2	22	18.8	adult	2	16	20.6	49th			
3	13	20.9	73rd	3	16	19.5	33rd			
4	14	22.7	81st	4	14	24.3	88th			
5	25	23.8	adult	5	18	18.7	14th			
6	18	20.8	32nd	6	15	21.8	68th			
7	19	20.2	16th	7	16	24.5	82nd			
8	15	21.0	57th	8	17	21.1	52nd			
9	18	20.8	30th	9	15	20.1	53rd			
10	17	21.7	41st	10	17	22.5	67th			
11	18	19.4	11th	11	16	25.9	89th			
12	29	22.0	adult	12	16	20.6	48th			
				13	17	22.1	61st			

	JHS2									
JHS2 Boys	Age	BMI	Percentile	JHS2 Girls	Age	BMI	Percentile			
1	17	16.3	1st	1	-	-	-			
2	16	18.2	9th	2	15	25.3	88th			
3	17	20.3	33rd	3	16	24.1	80th			
4	16	22.5	71st	4	-	-	-			
5	18	19.6	17th	5	17	22.4	65th			
6	19	20.8	25th	6	16	21.8	64th			
7	28	22.3	adult	7	27	21.3	adult			
8	28	23.6	adult	8	14	23.4	82nd			
9	-	-	-	9	20	22.1	adult			
10	28	23.3	adult	10	16	21.2	58th			
11	-	-	-				_			
12	-	-	-							
13	16	17.6	7th							
14	-	-	-							

JHS 3									
JHS3 Boys	Age	BMI	Percentile	JHS3 Girls	Age	BMI	Percentile		
1	-	-	-	1	16	23.4	77th		
2	16	20.8	53rd	2	13	20.3	66th		

3	22	23.5	adult	3	17	21.0	47th
4	23	21.0	adult	4	12	21.7	80th
5	16	22.1	69th	5	19	22.8	62nd
6	22	21.6	adult	6	18	21.9	54th
7	22	22.5	adult	7	15	19.4	35th
				8	18	25.5	84th
				9	-	-	-
				10	15	24.9	86th

## ATE Gombele JHS Baseline Data Analysis Report Appendix 3: Interviews – 9th and 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016



## **Students**

#### Vitalis Kob-Nour Tuu (DOB: 08/05/1994, Age: 22 yrs old, Class: JHS 3)

Vitalis lives with his mother and father and 3 sisters and 2 brothers. It takes him one hour to walk to school each way. He leaves home at approx 5.30am to get to school. School starts at 8am. His attendance is good and he only doesn't attend if he is unwell.

There are 16 in his class, about 5 leave early each day. He leaves early if he is hungry and tired. He often leaves early on Monday and Tuesday. School finishes at 2pm, he leaves before that.

His father is a farmer, his grandparents passed away.

He had no breakfast today, he never has breakfast. He had dinner last night, he has dinner every day. The family eats TZ most days. He finds it difficult to study in the afternoon because of hunger. Hunger makes him unhappy. He would like to progress on to Senior High School and then university. He would like to become a teacher while doing farming. (Teachers will usually use students as labourers on their farms once a week, each teacher will use the students in rotation.)

## Jennifer Yaayi (DOB: 5/6/2000, Age: 16 years old, Class: JHS 3)

Jennifer has five brothers who live with their mother and father down in the south of Ghana; Jennifer was sent north to Gombele to look after her grandfather. He doesn't have any other children to look after him, so she cooks and cleans for him.

She bicycles to school every day, it takes her two and a half hours to reach the school, and two and a half hours to go home. She is very tired sometimes but she still comes to school. She has had only 2 absences this term. The school has lent her the bicycle.

She has no breakfast before she leaves home. She sometimes eats a meal when she gets home, sometimes she doesn't. On the day of the interview she hasn't eaten for two days.

He grandfather receives money from her parents, but sometimes the money doesn't arrive so she and her grandfather go hungry. Naturally she finds it difficult to concentrate. She would like to go on to Senior High School and the University to study to become a nurse.

## Philip Gaab (DOB: 24.4.1994, Age: 22 years, Class: JHS 1)

Philip lives in Biro which is a 30 min bicycle ride away. He comes to school every day and doesn't leave early. He lives with his 2 brothers and 3 sisters. Both his parents died a long while ago. His elder brother looks after him and his sister cooks. His brother is a farmer. One of his brothers comes to Gombile school too. He never has breakfast but he does have dinner every night. The meal is normally TZ. He feels hungry at school, but at home there is normally some food.

He would like to continue to SHS, university, and then become a nurse.

#### Sarah Domovuule (DOB: 23/8/2002, 14 years, Class: JHS 1)

Sarah lives in Nagka which is a 2 hour walk away from school. She gets up at 5am every day to make the trip. Sometimes she doesn't come to school because of the distance. She never leaves school early. If she doesn't go to school she helps her father on the farm.

She lives with her mother and 2 brothers and 2 sisters. Her father is a retired teacher. Her sisters go to Primary school, her brothers go to university.

She never eats breakfast, but she eats dinner every night. Normally she eats TZ. She doesn't often feel hungry and is happy at school. She would like to go to SHS, university, and then become a nurse.

## Gabriel Bakuor (DOB: 21/8/1999, 17 years, Class: JHS 1)

Gabriel lives in Biro some 24km away. He bicycles to school each day and it takes him 2 hours each way. He comes every day and stays until the end of the day, 2pm.

He lives with his mother and 1 brother and 2 sisters. His father passed away. His siblings all go to school. His mother has no income.

He had no breakfast this morning but he normally eats something before school. He had no dinner last night. Sometimes he eats dinner, sometimes not. He often feels hungry but waits until the next meal rather going out foraging. He finds it difficult to concentrate both in the mornings and the afternoons. When he eats at home it is normally rice.

He is happy at school and wants to continue on to SHS, then university and study science. He would like to become a nurse.

Angelina Loliku (DOB: 12/09/1996, Age: 20 years, Class: JHS 2)

Angelina walks to school each day, it takes her an hour. She always stays at school until the end of the school day. She lives with her mother and father, her 2 brothers and 1 sister. Her sister has just started going to Jirapa SHS. Her father is a farmer, and Angelina works on the farm in the school holidays only. She never has breakfast, and she eats dinner only sometimes. She has dinner 4 days a week, and 3 days a week she goes hungry. The Babile market happens once a week, and after the market the family will have food for 4 days, then will go hungry for 3 days. 'When I come to school and I didn't eat I don't understand the teachers', she says. But she says she happy and would like to go on to SHS. She would like to be a nurse.

## **Teachers**

**Kogkane Michael** (English teacher, 4 years at Gombile, this is his second school posting).

He comes from Tuggo in Jirapa. His opinion of the children is that they are willing to learn, but they are fighting poverty and hunger. Their development physically is not what it should be, they are not growing as fast as they should. Concentration in class drops off in the afternoon.

Michael thinks that characteristics such as moodiness, shyness, fearfulness and timidity are a direct result of hunger. He sees the drop out rate as a result of parents who are not financially capable of looking after the family. The children fend for themselves, trying to get hold of books and uniforms, but then eventually drop out. Michael suggested that the children are neglected emotionally at home. He feels the community support for the school is strong. The majority of students go on to SHS.

**Richard Barnieh** (Social Studies teacher. This is his second year of teaching).

He comes from the Ashanti region. He believes Gombile JHS is not a happy school because of hunger and poverty. He feels the community is not supportive; when children drop out there is no help in returning them. He notes poor concentration in the afternoon. The hunger of the children translates itself into moodiness. There is a PTA meeting once, maybe twice a term. (All parents are automatically members of the PTA)

Emanuel Baba (Headteacher. 6 years as headteacher of Gombele JHS. 24 years as a teacher).

He believes there are more challenges at Gombele than at any of his other postings because of the severe poverty. Also the parents are not interested in education and he has difficulty getting parents enthused about the school. He regularly goes to parents' houses and addresses meetings trying to get parents to come into school more often and show an interest. Emanuel says that lack of emotional interest from the parents for their children leads to timid, shy and demoralised children.

There are more drop outs from girls than from boys. Girls will often start in the majority in Class 1, but then start to leave. By Class 2 and 3 boys are in the majority. He feels this is because the girls are more neglected, and early marriage is common. Boys will leave to go south in the school holidays, find a manual work and never return. During farming season attendance will be low, ie June through to September. The school desperately needs textbooks, at the moment students are sharing textbooks, 5 to a textbook. Students buy their own exercise books. He would also like to have computers, an NGO donated a generator a while ago that they could use for electricity.

The head felt his school could absorb higher numbers of students due to the feeding programme with no difficulty.

Despite the poverty Gombele JHS has managed to achieve good exam results. Last year Gombele JHS was no. 1 for BECE exam results in the Babile Circuit, and no. 3 in the Lawra district.

## **Parents**

## Tierko Sammy (Farmer and leader of the PTA, 35 years old, male)

Sammy has 6 of his own children plus 2 kid brothers and 1 young sister to look after. All but one of the children are at school. One child wasn't able to transition from JHS to SHS because of the cost of the fees. He now farms with Sammy.

Sammy is the leader of the PTA. The PTA in Gombele consists of all parents of children at the school. He feels he gets good feedback from the teachers who answer all his questions.

He finds finding the money for school uniforms, pens and books a struggle. He finds providing one meal a day can be difficult. Normally the family eats for 4 days after the Babile market day, and then go hungry as they wait for the next market day. When they go hungry the children come home early, for example on 3 days a week. Sammy says they enjoy school, but not when they are hungry. His children also stay at home sometimes because of ripped and or dirty clothes. They also may come home because of teasing. When they do eat, the meal is normally TZ, or beans.

John Diruzie (Farmer and Chairman of the School Management Committee, 61 years old, male) John has 7 children; 5 boys and 2 girls. John is chairman of the School Management Committee. He supervises attendance and performance, and checks books. He visits the school twice a week. His role is voluntary. He has had a good experience of communication with the teachers. He says the community around Gombele is very happy with the school and that the school desperately needs more textbooks. All John's children have been to Gombele JHS. 6 have completed SHS and one of them has left university where he studied nutrition. He has one child at teacher training college and one here at JHS. He has had to postpone the entry to nursing college for one of his children because of difficulty in raising the fees. He also has difficulty in providing meals all the way through the year for his children, especially June to September. The rest of the year they eat.

## Simon Santu (PTA member, 33 years old, male)

Simon has 7 children; 5 of them attend school the other two (a boy and a girl) are dropouts. The boy went down south to become a labourer, the girl left home to be with her boyfriend.

The 5 who attend are at Gombele. They are happy at school except when they are hungry. Their attendance rate goes down when they are hungry, especially in the summer months. Food also runs out at the end of the week before Babile market, so they experience 2 or 3 days of hunger. Even so the children tend to stay at school until 2pm.

He visits the school often, as much as 5 times a term, as well as attending PTA meetings. He gets good feedback from the teachers and the community is very happy with the school. He would like the school to be more active and play football which the school has stopped because the school football became punctured.

He is very ambitious for his children as he had no education.

#### Christie Nuoseyma (Farmer, 40 years old, female)

She is married, her husband lives down south, buts sends money. She has 7 children but 2 of them have died. Of the 5 remaining (3 boys and 2 girls) 3 of them go to Gombele primary, but 2 went to the primary and have now dropped out, because of the fees. They now help with the farming. The children in the Primary will continue to JHS.

She has difficulties with food in the summer months, and struggles to provide at the end of the week before Babile market day. The children go hungry. When they are hungry the children play truant, or often come home early. They would come to JHS everyday if food was provided.

At the last PTA meeting the teachers urged the parents to come in more often to the school, at least 2 or 3 times a term. She says she gets good feedback from the school and is happy with the school. She worries that the school has no running water. She would like her children to continue to SHS and then university.

## **Non-attenders**

## Naabata Euralius (10 years old, male)

His father died, he now lives with his mother. Naabata was at school for 4 years. He liked school and would like to go back but his mother can't afford the uniform. His mother also needs him for the farm. He has 5 sisters who all started school but have now stopped. He has a younger sister who stays at home, his older sisters are all married.

Food is very sporadic, sometimes he eats, sometimes not. When he is hungry he goes into the bush to find fruits. If there were school meals he thinks he could attend school and still have time to farm after school.

#### Kuuguma (Doesn't know his age).

He lives with his mother and father, his father is a farmer. He has 1 sister and 2 brothers, his brothers live down south with his uncle. He lives close by. He has never been to school, but would like to go to school. He doesn't attend school because of the cost of the uniform and books.

He works on the farm, but he thinks he'd be able to work the farm in the afternoons after school and attend the Primary school. He had no breakfast this morning and no dinner last night. He ate at lunch yesterday. He has no idea when he'll eat again. He regularly goes hungry in the lead up to Babile market day.

## Kwame Kupiolo (He doesn't know his age).

He lives in Gombele with his 3 sisters and 1 brother. His father is a farmer. Kwame used to go to Gombele Primary, but his parents took him out to work as a cowherd. He wants to go to school but his parents won't allow it. He ate dinner last night and eats dinner every night. He always eats TZ.

## Kuuyir Johnson (20 years old)

Johnson attended school to JHS Form 1, then dropped out. He lost both his parents and an uncle initially took care of him, but then he left 7 years ago which left Johnson fending for himself. At that point he left school and he took up farming. Even if food had been provided at school he still wouldn't have turned up. He did enjoy school though. Johnson now farms but would like to learn an apprenticeship in carpentry. We have encouraged him to apply for an ATE apprenticeship.

#### Niberkuu John (25 years old)

John never attended school. His father died when young, his mother looked after him and his 6 brothers and 4 sisters. None of his siblings went to school either. He would like to have attended school but the cost was too much. His brothers now all farm, one of his sister's brews pito.

Food was always a problem, especially in the summer months. They sometimes had 3 meals a day, sometimes nothing at all. If there had been school feeding they would have attended school.